

## **STANDING ORDERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL**

As approved on 1 July 1972, and amended on 10 December 1977, 18 December 1982, 7 December 1985, 6 June 1987, 30 May 1992, 8 December 2007, 10 May 2014, 07 December 2016, 20 April 2021.

### **Meetings of Council**

#### *Statutory Meetings*

1. The General Council shall assemble twice per year, the dates of such meetings being determined from time to time by the Business Committee; subject always to notice of any intended change being submitted for approval by the Council at the Statutory Meeting immediately before that at which it is intended to come into effect.

#### *Special Meetings*

2. In addition to the statutory meetings, the Council may hold special meetings at the instance of the Chancellor, whom failing the Principal, who shall convene such meetings on a requisition from a quorum of members.

#### *Quorum*

3. The quorum of the Council shall be twenty.

#### *Adjournment*

4. The Council may adjourn any meeting.

#### *Notice of Motions*

5. Notice of every motion to be proposed at a meeting of Council shall be given to the Clerk in writing, signed by the member giving it, fourteen days at least before the date of such meeting. But this Order shall not apply to **(a)** any motion for the adoption of a Committee's Report which has been duly transmitted to the Clerk in terms of the Standing Orders; **(b)** any motion for the adjournment of the Council, or of a debate, or for proceeding to the next business, or for resolving the Council into a Committee, or **(c)** any relevant amendment to a motion before the Council.

#### *Notice of Meetings*

6. Seven days at least before every meeting of Council (whether statutory, special or adjourned), such notice shall be given as the Business Committee may deem expedient.

#### *Papers to be held as read*

7. The printed papers distributed under the preceding Order shall include the draft minute of the preceding meeting of Council; and such distribution shall be held equivalent to reading of the minute and other papers.

#### *Chairman of Meetings, etc.*

8. At the meetings of the Council, the Chancellor, whom failing the Rector, whom failing the Principal, whom failing the Chancellor's Assessor, whom failing the Convener or Vice-

Convener of the Business Committee shall preside, and in the absence of all of the said officials a Chairman shall be elected by the meeting.

*Power of Chairman*

9. The Chairman shall have a deliberative and a casting vote, and in case of an equality of votes at the conclusion of a poll the Chairman shall have a casting vote. The Chairman shall decide all points of order.

*Order of Business*

10. Unless the Council shall otherwise determine, the order of business at any meeting shall be according to the programme of business prepared by the Business Committee.

*Quorum at Meetings*

11. (1) If a quorum of members be not present within twenty minutes after the time appointed for a meeting, such meeting shall not be held.  
  
(2) If at any time during a meeting a quorum of members be not present, the Chairman shall suspend the proceedings of the meeting until a quorum be present; but if no quorum be present within twenty minutes next after such suspension, the meeting shall be dissolved.

*Orders in Debate*

*Notice of dropped Motions to be renewed*

12. If a motion, of which notice has been given, be not moved by the member who has given notice, or by some other member on his behalf, when it comes on in due course, it shall, unless postponed by leave of the Council be held as dropped, and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

*Motions, etc. to be moved, seconded, etc.*

13. Every motion and amendment shall be moved and seconded and given to the Clerk in writing, and read by the Chairman to the meeting before any further discussion may take place thereon.

*No Member to speak twice*

14. No member may address the Council more than once on any motion or amendment, but the mover of a substantive motion may reply, and in his reply shall strictly confine himself to answering previous speakers, and shall not introduce any new matter into the debate; and after the mover has been called on by the Chairman to reply no other member may speak in that debate except to a point of order, or, with the permission of the Chairman, in explanation of some material part of a speech made by him which he believes to have been misunderstood.

*Withdrawal of Motions, etc*

15. No motion or amendment may be withdrawn except by leave of the Council; and leave to withdraw a motion or amendment on which a contingent motion has been moved shall not be given until such contingent motion has been disposed of.

### *Putting Motions and Amendments*

16. (1) When only one amendment has been proposed to a motion, the amendment shall be put against the motion.
- (2) When more than one amendment has been proposed, the amendment last proposed shall be put against the immediately preceding, and then the amendment which is carried shall be put against the next preceding, and so on until there remains only one amendment, which shall then be put against the original motion.
- (3) After the vote between the original motion and the amendment has been taken, the motion or amendment carried shall forthwith be put as a substantive resolution without further discussion.

### *Dilatory Motions*

17. It shall be competent to move the previous question; and such motion, or a motion for the adjournment of the council or of a debate, or for proceeding to the next business, may be made at any time during a meeting and such motion shall take the place of any business before the meeting.

### *Committees*

#### *Committees of Council*

18. The Council shall appoint a Business Committee annually at the Statutory Meeting in May/June and, from time to time, shall appoint other Committees to investigate into and report upon any matter remitted to them, or to carry out instructions given to them by the Council.

#### *Business Committee*

19. The Business Committee shall consist of not more than twenty-seven members: The Principal, up to four independent members of Court who are also members of the General Council, and the Clerk of Council (if a member of the General Council), ex officio, with not more than twenty-one elected members. The elected members shall select which independent members of Court may sit ex officio, if more than four are eligible. The elected members shall hold office for three years from the first day of October next following their election, or for such other period as the Council shall in Statutory Meeting approve. Except as provided in Order 21 below, such members may serve not more than three consecutive terms of three years, but will be eligible for re-election after a break of one year from the date of the conclusion of their third term of office.
20. The nominations process for elections to the Business Committee will be announced at the December Statutory meeting, with the deadline for nominations set to be not more than sixty-nine days and not less than forty-eight days before the May/June Statutory meeting of the General Council. Any two members of Council, desiring to nominate another member for election or re-election, must give notice in writing to the Clerk by the agreed deadline, and such nomination or nominations shall be intimated in the notice of meeting sent to each member of the Council. Eight weeks notice must be given by public advertisement of every Statutory Meeting at which an election to the Business Committee is due. If more members are nominated than there are vacancies to be filled, election shall be by ballot at the meeting of Council. In the event of a tie in the ballot for election of members of the Business Committee it will be resolved by a show of hands at the meeting, allowing only one vote per member present. Should this not give a decisive result the issue will be decided by lot.

### *Convenership of the Business Committee*

- 21.** The Business Committee shall appoint from their number a Convener and Vice-Convener for a term of three years in each case. The holders shall be eligible for re-election for a second term of office so long as that term starts before the end of the holders' third consecutive term as a member of the Committee (in which case, the holders may continue as members of the Committee until the expiry of their term of office as Convener/Vice-convener). A vacancy arising through death, resignation or cause other than retirement in ordinary rotation shall be filled by the Business Committee without undue delay. A person appointed to fill such a vacancy shall hold office for the same period as the member in whose place he is appointed would have continued in office. If at any meeting neither the Convener nor the Vice-Convener is present at the time appointed for holding the same, the members present shall choose one of their number to chair such meeting

### *Quorum of Committees*

- 22.** Unless otherwise determined by the Council, seven members shall be the quorum of a Committee.

### *Convenership of other Committees*

- 23.** If no Convener be appointed by the Council to any other Committee, that Committee shall elect a Convener; and, if at any meeting the Convener be not present at the time appointed for holding the same, the members present shall choose one of their number to be Chairman of such meeting.
- 24.** Any question arising at a meeting of a Committee shall be determined by a majority of votes of the members present and voting on such question: and, in case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

### *Reports of Committees*

- 25.** Every report of a Committee shall, through its Convener or Vice-Convener or some other member appointed by the Committee for that purpose, be transmitted to the Clerk of Council fourteen days at least before the date of the meeting of Council at which such report is intended to be presented.

### *Minutes of Committees*

- 26.** Minutes of the resolution and proceedings of every meeting of a Committee, with the names of the members present thereat, shall be prepared by or under the direction of the Convener or Vice-Convener of such Committee, or, in the absence of both, the Chairman of such meeting; and, after being approved of by the Committee, shall be laid on the table of the Council at the presentation of the report of the Committee.

### *Reports of Committees*

- 27.** Unless the Council otherwise determine, every Report of a Committee when received by the Council shall be entered on the Minutes.

### *Suspension and Alteration of Standing Order*

- 28.** Subject to the provisions of the Statutes and Ordinances, any one or more of the Standing Orders may in a case of urgency be suspended or dispensed with at any meeting, so far as

regards any business at such meeting, provided that two-thirds of the members of the Council present and voting shall so determine.

29. Notice of every motion for the alteration or repeal of any of the Standing Orders shall be given at a meeting of Council, three months at the least before the date of the meeting at which such motion is intended to be proposed, and such motion shall not be taken into consideration except at the first diet of a statutory meeting.

*Interpretation of Terms*

30. In the Standing Orders, unless the context otherwise requires-

“Statutory Meeting” means a meeting of the Council held in terms of section six of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1858, and includes any adjournment thereof.

“Special Meeting” means a special meeting of the Council held in terms of section nine (1) of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1966, and includes and adjournment thereof.

**Duncan Macniven, Convener**